

THE
Life and Death
OF
RALPH WALLIS
The COBLER of
GLOCESTER:

Together with some inquiring
into the Mystery of

Conventicleism.

Miscemus multis seria multa jocis.

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THE

Life and Death

GEOFFREY

Conventicle

1800

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The Preface.

HAmpridius writing the lives of several Roman Emperours, when he came down to Heliogabalus, made a stand, Debating with himself whether or no he ought to write his life also, which because it was so bad, he thought 'twas best to pass by in silence; but then considering that the lives of Caligula, Nero, Vitellus, and other wicked Emperours stood registred to posterity, he thereupon put the life of that Monster of Mankind Heliogabalus, upon the file of time, also the like consist had I with my self essaying to write the life of the wicked Cobler of Gloucester, but finding that the lives of German Lazarillous Hanham, and other Thieves and Rogues were upon Record, I thereupon resolved to picture this Cobler as near the life as I could, which I tell you before hand will be a very deformed piece; had I a mind to bely him, I could hardly do it, he was so bad of himself, and he said and did so ill against the living while he was amongst them, that it is no wonder if you find not one good word of him here, now he is dead. My design in writing his life, is to acquaint the world who it was that so troubled it with scrawling and bawling against the Church, and it's Ministers, that thereby the rigorous censures of all, unjustly conceived against it and them by the injurious tongue and pen of the Cobler may be mitigated. And truly the world had had this account of him long ago, had not I expected that some Tyburnian Chronologer, or Ballad-maker (for whom this Subject is most proper) would e're this have put out some Relation of him, and got it cry'd in the streets with the lives of the two Dudley's and Damaris Page: but finding that those Red Lattice Historians are silent, I have taken this pains but just time enough to prevent Poor Robins Almanack to tell you who and what this Cobler was.

He was a base Instrument, which the Panaticks us'd to rake

The Preface.

in dirt with, that they might not foul their own fingers. He was their Champion to encounter the Church, and pull the Bishops thence, & the Gyants of old did Heaven to debron the Gods, and to this end he was furnish'd by them (instead of other Amunition) with Pamphlets and Libels, and charg'd up to the mouth with lyes and slanders, which he let flye (like hail-shot) against the Church and Church-men, to bespatter it's Government, and their Lives.

The Fanaticks Triumph'd in him over the Church of England, because (although he gave them so many just provocations, by writing and speaking dishonourably of them) none ever answer'd him. But let not the Fanaticks imagine it was so hard a matter to confute the Cobler as Bellermin. I would have them know, it was the innocency and moderation of the scandalized Church-men that advis'd them not to descend to take notice of what the Conventicle-leaders said and writ by the mouth and pen of this wicked Cobler against them. It is far below the generosity of any Christian Church-men to be mov'd at the calumnies and ignominious imputations of the Mountebank Ministers, or their degenerate Merry Andrew-like Cobler, for they prudently agree with Tacitus, that *Maledicta spreta exolescunt*, and like that magnanimus injuriarum contemptor Socrates, disdain to be angry at the kicking of Asses and barking of Dogs (for such were the Cobler and those his instigators, continually kicking against the Government, and barking against Celestial bodies.) They hold it to be præstantissimum ultionis genus rebus ipsis et moribus confutare hanc Toyloorum sectam, quæ in eorum acta tam sedulo inquirant ut ea fingant quæ nunquam fuisse; and can say of such their malevolent calumniators (as Philip Alexanders Father said of the Athenians) quod assiduis eorum convitiis meliores in dies efficiantur et diligentius vitam instituant.

And now let any wise man judge by this following relation, whether the Cobler did not deserve contempt, the Conventicle-leaders his stimulators punishment, and their followers pity.

THE



The LIFE and DEATH

OF

RALPH WALLIS

THE

COBLER of GLOCESTER.



Am not so good a Herauld as to translate *this Translator* out of his Original: wherefore to begin with him, letting his nasty Pedegree alone, I look upon him as a *Mushrom* sprung up in the late Dung-hill Times, which gave growth to many such base Weeds, and kept

under more generous Plants: An *Uppstart* was then no Prodigy, there were many then extracted something out of nothing by a strange Chymical Art much in practise in those daies: It was ordinary to see a *Gentleman* or a *Preacher* generated out of the corruption of a *Soldier* or a *Tradesman*, amongst the rest the obscure *Cobler* began, to conceive high thoughts, being bob'd o'th Elbow by the daily examples of many *Heroique Uppstarts*, who advanc'd themselves from as mean Originals as his own: The Tropicks of *Antistades*

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would

would not let *Themistocles* take his rest, neither could the *Cobler* be quiet for Emulation; he saw that *Vavasor Powell* had thrown off his *Curry Comb*, disdaining any longer to be an *Uddler*; *Duchery Croston* had left his *Counter*, and that the celebrated *Saint of Salisbury Court, Farington*, had left from his *Loom*; and therefore the *Cobler* saw no reason why he might not as well bounce from his *Bulk*; nay, which is more, this single sol'd *Cobler* saw his single-ey'd Brother *Huson* making himself great by his *Sword*, and why might not he open a *Trap-door* to his *Fortune* by some *Pick-lock way* or other; one *Cobler* had as much impudence, and as little honesty, as the other: *Ralph Wallis* had a face of as good mettle, as *Husons* *Armor*, and time discover'd that he was as stout a Brother of the *Quill*, as *Huson* was of the *Blade*; nay, he had this signal advantage over him, for whereas *Huson* having but one eye might be taken oth' *blind side*, *Ralph Wallis* could brag with the men of *China*, that he saw with two eyes.

The *Cobler* of *Gloucester*'s ambition being thus set on edge by the daily preserment of his Brother *Rogues*, he calls a *Council* of his own, and his *Wife*'s wit, to know how his watering chops also might tast the sweetness of these licentious times; after mature chew of the *Cud*, it was concluded, that *Religion*, that profitable *Craft*, should be the first way for him to raise his *Fortune* by; whereupon to begin the work of *Reformation* upon himself, he left off turning *Ballads*, and fell a singing *Psalms*, both in's *House* and *Stall*; and though 'twas a hard matter for him, being a *Cobler*, to leave off *Whistling*, yet he made sure never to whistle, but to the tune of some of *Robert Wisdome Thomas Sternhold*, or *John Hopkins* Meeter. So a certain *Colonel*, to give *God* thanks for the *Kings* defeat at *Worcester*, instead of singing a *Te Deum*, said to his *Troop*, *Let us whistle to the praise of God the hundredth Psalm*.

The *Cobler* would whistle and sing *Psalms* from four in the morning till twelve at night, to the great disturbance of many weary Travellers that lay near him; but by this means he got himself the reputation of a *Religious Neighbour* amongst the *Godly of Gloucester*, who for his pretended Piety let him have the mending of all their old Shoes, and gave him many a *Sundays Dinner*, and afternoons *Lunchin*.

The *Cobler* animated with this good success of his singing, made no question but that in time he might arrive to the faculty of *Canting*, and by that means exchange his *Cobbling Trade* for a *Saintship*, yet he was a little discouraged for the present, being that like a true *Cobler*, he could neither write nor read: but that obstacle was quickly remov'd, for his *Wife*, who no doubt had a *Prophetical Spirit*, having it one night reveal'd by her *Familiar* in a dream, that one time or other her Husband would deserve hanging, advis'd him by all means to put himself into a capacity of claiming the benefit of the Clergy; whereupon taking his *Wife's* admonition, he fell to his *Horn-book*, and being a little acquainted with his *Letters*, he skipt over to the Testament, not taking the *Primer* and *Plater* in's way, because they had *Common Prayer* in their *Bellies*; and thus with much pains, and his *Wife's* great care, he learnt his *Neck-verse*; and considering that the *Art of Writing* might stand him in as good stead, he by some means or other learnt to scrawl a little *false English*.

The *Cobler* was scarce able to read the *Scripture*, but he took upon him the *Interpretation* of it; for finding it written, that *Paul* wrought with his own hands, he thought he might probably be a *Cobler*; nay, this *Cordwainer* would undertake to enter into the most *difficult* *Labyrinth* of *Scripture*, and come out again the right way, by the *Cord* or *Clew* of his own imagination.

By this time his Shop was too little to hold him, he would not hide his Farthing Candle under a Bushel, nor bury his two *poor* Talent in the ground, but he pack'd up his Awls, and out he went, to proclaim how much the Riches of Grace were advanc'd in an empty *nothing* Cocker. Long he had not been out of his Bulk, ere he was receiv'd into several silly Widdows houses, who for the seeming Sanctity of his Conversation, suffer'd him to exercise his Gifts amongst them; and when any Master of a Family went from home, he commonly supply'd his absence, doing all kinds of Family Duty at his house; for which his service, he usually got his paunch fill'd, and something else.

The Cabler having thus renounced the Order of *Saint Hugh*, might have liv'd very plentifully upon the Incomes of his Prayers, which like *Peters Fish*, afforded him both meat and money; but yet finding his Fortune too low roop'd for his high spirit, and this praying Profession too strict for his boundless mind, he soon became weary of it, and turn'd it off like an unprofitable servant; and being of a Nature more inclin'd to trouble then quietness, he fell a repining at his low condition; and thought to raise it by impoverishing others: This made him so ready to undertake that Hangman-like employment under *Olivers Commissioners*, of being an *Under-Sequestrator* of the Loyal Parties Goods; in which Office he was as cruel as a common Executioner, insulting over the Loyalists adversity: Besides, he was a *Knight of the Post* to the *Oliverian* Crew, for when ever they suspected any Gentleman guilty of the Crime of being true to his King and Conscience, or were jealous that any honest Minister stood disaffected to *Olivers* Government over the Church or State, *Ralph Wallis*, the *Cabler of Gloucester*, would offer himself for a small sum to be an *Informers*, or *Journey-man-Swearer* against them:

But

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But this employment also he left off, not out of any honest Principle, but because he was usually cheated of the wages he was promis'd for his Perjury, at which he took such distast, that he fell a railing against them that set him on that wicked work: But besides this his just displeasure conceived against the Government, he had a strange Antipathy to any Power, and like a true *Sectary*, he could not be quiet under any Government long. And hence it was that he rail'd so against *Oliver* and the *Rump-Parliament*, fathering several nameless Pamphlets put out against them.

Had he cry'd down *Olivers* Power, that this might have come up, there had been something to have commended him for; but 'tis certain he had no other design but to shew his general Enmity to any Power, in venturing his Neck so in *Olivers* time, that doubtless he had been hang'd, and so fulfill'd his Wife's Dream, had not the Devil, his back-friend, preserv'd him to do him more such service in this Government, as I shall relate.

When the *Rump* was unroosted, which all the time it sat hatch'd many ungodly Chucks, amongst other good Reformatiions, the Churches, which had a long time been *Dens of Thieves*, became *Houses of Prayer* again, and the *Upstart-Gospellers* were dispossest of their usurped Benefices, who fearing least their Kingdome should be now at an end, and that they should return to their *Shops* again, which they had so advantageously exchange'd for *Pulpits*, (like as the Legion of Devils chose rather to enter into an Herd of Swine, then to return to the place from whence they came) entred into an Herd of dull, melancholly, ill-looking, and worse-meaning people, chusing rather to get their livings by leading them like *Owls* into Barns and by-places, and teaching them to repine against the Government, then honestly to thrive in the Callings wherein their mean Fortunes at first plac'd them.

Thase

These *Handy-craft-Preachers*, like the Masters of the *South-saying-Damsel*, seeing the hope of their gains was like to be gone, did like *Demetrius the Silver-Smith*, call together their Fellow *Craft-men*, who considering in what peril their advantageous Craft was to come to nought, put all the Towns and Cities into such uproars, that the *Town-Clerks* and *Magistrates* cannot quiet them.

These *Mecanick Ministers*, and other *Changling Church-men*, being vext they made no more hast to be rich while their Sun shin'd, by all sinister means endeavour to bring all things into the same confusion again, to which intent they have got on their side all those that entred into that Solemn League and Covenant of living and dying *Rebels*, and all that tasted the sweetness of the late *licentious times*, who like Kill-shetp dogs, impatient of restraint, would fain be ravening again, and therefore Cur-like they snarl at the *Magistrates* of Church and State, howling and crying out for Liberty of Conscience, saying, 'twill never be well till there be an *Amsterdam* in *England*, that every man may do what is right in his own eyes, by all which they mean an *Ambuscado*, for their further impious designs.

These kind of malevolent people, I say, from the first design'd the ruine of the present Government, but considering it must be a work of time and policy, like great *Machiavillians*, they made choice of that seldome-failing Stratagem, *Zeal for Reformation in Religion*, to encrease their own Party by, and lessen the power of them in Rule; whereupon the *Pulpiteers* of this disaffected Faction entring into private Assemblies, fell a Praying and Preaching (as they do still) against the times, deriding the Government of the Church, and crying out for Reformation thereof, thus warring against the *Bishops*, that they may again triumph over the King.

Herein

Herein they were great *Politicians* indeed, and cunningly consider'd, that the most impious designs were usually palliated with the most specious pretexts of Piety, they well remembred how successful the *Pulpit* had been in former *Rebellions*; and that no wicked Plot was ever laid without some *Preacher* in it; they call'd to mind, how that the Famous General *Jack Straw's* endeavours had been in vain, without the strong assistance of *Parson Ball*; how the *Gunpowder Plot* had never been laid, without the contrivance of *Father Garnet*; and how *Oliver Cromwel* had never been *Lord Protector*, had not his *Black Coats* laid about them in the *Pulpits*, as his *Red Coats* did in the *Field*. King *John* was poisoned by a *Monk*, King *Henry of France* was stabb'd by a *Jacobin Fryer*, and our late *Sovereign* was condemn'd from the *Pulpit*, ere he had his Sentence from the *Bench*; and so was his Loyal Subject *Montrose* in *Scotland*. The *Pope* can do more with his *Swarmis of Fryers and Jesuites*, then with *Regiments of Horse and Foot*. All this (I say) was well known to the disaffected Faction, who to bring about their designs, thought it good policy to have a *Regiment of private Gospellers* also scatter'd up and down, which like *Fiered Beacons* might alarum their whole Forces to rise when they saw opportunity.

Besides these *Privaters*, they had certain *Emissaries* or *Factors* of their Faction in several parts, which like *Incendiary Jesuites* might enter into Churches and Houses to raise *Mutinies* amongst the people against their *Ministers*; and by prying into their discontents, by deceiving them with Lies and Scandals upon *Episcopacy*, and by using any kind of wicked means whatsoever, might make them *Rebels* to the Church, and *Turn-coats* to *Conventicles*.

Amongst other *Whelps* of this Litter, the *Cobler of Gloucester* having got himself the reputation of an *Ingenious man*, in reference to any kind of mischief, that the Devil Man, or his

his own wicked invention could prompt him to, was look'd upon as a *Person* very fitly qualific'd for this Employment; and he finding it like to prove a thriving way, needed no stronger invitation than his own *poverty* to tempt him to't, for so he could but make his *cloaths* whole, he ca'd not though 'twas by making Rents and Divisions in the Church. He therefore readily fell to his task, which was to convert, divert, and pervert all the seduceable people he could meet with, sending them like Sheep to his Neighbouring *Conventicle Leaders*, who were to give him a share of their *Golden Fleece*. He was also to invent Lyes, and raise Calumnies upon the Church and Church-men: He was also to Father *Libels*, and scatter *Pamphlets*, tending to the dishonor of the Church; and in a word, to do any base thing that *Conventicle Leaders*, and others his Abettors and Pay-masters should put him upon: He had assign'd him for a Province to exercise his Rogueries in, all *Glocestershire*, but all *England* was a limit narrow enough for him to expatiate his mighty self in, for his Legs and Tongue were in continual motion, and both body and mind were always rambling; and in all parts where ever he came, he was so nimble an *Agent* for *Non-conformity*, that *Westminster Hall* is not so much beholding to all the *Green Bags* in *England* together, for creating Law-suits, as the *Fanatick Faction* was to this their great Minister, the *Cobler of Glocester*, for the multitude of *Non-conformists*.

No man cry'd louder for a *Toleration*, and *Liberty of Conscience*; no man cast more dirt upon the *Lawn* and *Holland* of the Church; no man more furious against the Eaters of *Plum-broth*, and Minc'd Pyes at *Christmasts*, though he himself would as greedily devour those *Superstitious meats* then, as *Flesh* in *Lent* and *Ember weeks*; no man a greater Enemy to any kind of decency; no man a greater Abuser of the *Clergy*, witness his *Dialogue* betwixt him and his *Wife*,
where

where he lays faults to their charge that never were committed, just like a *Tyburn Poet*, that commonly gets a lying Relation of the Malefactors Execution printed ere they suffer; nay, he would not only belve the Church, but the Court also; for having somewhere heard that *Drollery* was much in fashion there, he gave out in the Country, that the Court was full of *Idolary*: He would call the *Common Prayer* as bad as a *Common Whore*, and say it had swearing and cursing in it: He would mock the *Organs*, and singing men, in a tone as ugly as the *howling of a Dog*, and call a *Surplis*, Scarfe and Scarlet, the very Smock, Hood, and Petticoat of the Whore of *Babylon*; he would rail without either fear or wit against the Magistrates and Ministers, contemning their power, and slandering their lives; he had an inveterate malice against *Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction*, because he was too wicked to live under it, and he hated a *Chancellor* as an untoward Boy doth his School-master: He would speak *Treason* as familiarly as *Non-sense*, and sometimes he would *blaspheme*, to shew he neither ear'd for Earthly nor Heavenly Power.

He was once Indicted for denying the Kings Supremacy over the Church, and being found Guilty, was fin'd twenty pounds, and committed to Prison, where he was order'd to stay until he found sufficient Security for his good behaviour, but he came off more favourably then an honest man should have done, being favour'd by a certain Officer, who for fear of offending his Wife, and other Saints and Saintesses, set him at liberty ere he had performed the Order of Court.

'Tis long of such that Meeting Houses go up faster then Churches in *London*, and I'm afraid there's too many of them that can find in their hearts to contribute to the erecting or hiring of a Meeting House, but take no

more care to have the Churches up again.

This is much to the purpose, but not so much to the *Cobler* in hand, who (as I said before) was continually scandalizing the Government both of Church and State; and truly it would require a whole Volume to set down all the abuses, injuries, and incivilities he put upon the Church and Church-men; but it shall suffice me to tell you, that as a *Whore* prostitutes her self neither for love nor lust, but only gain, so what ever the *Cobler* wrote, said, or did, to the dishonor of the Government of Church and State, was neither for Conscience nor Religions sake, but only for a few Contributions and Meals Meat, which he had allow'd him from *Conventuellers*, and *Conventicle Leaders*, some whereof, when ever they had a mind to shew their irreconcilable spleen to the Church, and by consequence to the State, would vent it in some scurrilous *Libel* or other, which for a little money they could get the *Cobler* to Father upon himself, but for his own part he never had any issue of his brain, except that *illegitimate Dialogue*, which he conceived and brought forth in so mis-shapen a Method, that it would have plainly appear'd to be the work of a *Cobler* indeed, had not some such Abettors of his Facts, as *Conventicle Leaders*, lick'd it, like a Bear, into a little more tollerable shape. In that *Dialogue*, the *Cobler* often makes mention of his *Wife*, which shews what use he made of her in all his Counsels. *Lentulus* the *Proconsul*, made great use of his *Wife's* counsel in all his business: Pope *Innocent* the XIII. advis'd much with his *Niece*: The Author of the familiar *Epistles* imparted all his secrets to his *Concubine*; but the *Cobler* made more use of a Woman then they all, for without his *Wife* he could do nothing; she was a good *Linguist*, and taught him both to read and scold; she was also of a good invention, and help'd him

to

to make Lies: In a word, he was to him instead of an Oracle, *Satyr*, and *Familiar*, and if he was not a *Witch*, yet he was foul enough to be suspected for one.

Many other Books besides this *Dialogue* did the *Cobler* own, though tis certain he could never write true Sense, Tenſe, Case, nor Figure; but for all that he had an itching mind to be scribbling, and like as *Diogenes* of *Corinth*, ſeeing his Countrymen all busie in reſiſting King *Philip's* Siege, leaſt he alone ſhould be idle amongſt ſo many workers, tell a tumbling his *Tub* up and down. So this indefatigable *Cobler* diſdaining to be idle amongſt ſo many *Goſt-quill* men, who with their idle brains, and idle pens, were daily filling the world with ſedition, cry'd *Room for the Cobler of Gloceſter*, and ſell a railing, for want of Wit and matter, againſt the times, deriding the *Laws*, and ſlandering the Government.

Reſolv'd he was to get himſelf a Name, and conſidering he had not *virtues* to do it by, he therefore thriftily manag'd his *Fires* to that end, chuſing rather to die odiously with *Jack Cade*, and *Wat Tyler*, then to live obſcurely.

Pauſanias kill'd *Philip* of *Macedon*, that he might be talk'd of to Poſterity; and another infamous *Fame-hunter* burnt *Diana's Temple*; and ſo the *Cobler* did the King, and the Church as much diſgrace as he could, that he might get himſelf a reputation, though 'twas of a *Roane*; and this made him ſo ready to own, as his *Act* and *Deed* ſo many ſcandalous and virulent Pamphlets, which tis certain he was never the ſacrineſſous Author of.

The *Cobler* indeed had *Sulphur* enough, though not *Mercury* in him to compaſs ſuch abusive ſtuff, and how droſſy ſoever his writings were in the *Or*, he might eaſily get them refin'd by ſeveral lying Libellers of his own Faction: But for all that, I believe they were none of his, but that

some *Fan-fac'd Conventiclers* might club their wicked wits for such opprobrious conceptions, and the *Cobler* might with his *private Printer* help to bring them into the world: But however, tis certain he distributed them amongst the *disaffected* in the Country, and there was no *Conventicle Leader* but had them, who (as their custom is to build their reputation upon others disgrace) made use of them to bring an *odium* upon the Government, thanking God, like the self-justifying *Pharisee*, that they were not like those *Publicans* and sinners, the *Courtiers* and Clergy of *England*.

The *Cobler* presented his good friend Captain L. with these Pamphlets, who told me, much applauding them, that they were the works of the witty *Cobler of Gloucester*; but telling him, that the Epithete of *Witty* was above the capacity of a *Cobler* to deserve, Oh Sir, said he, you must understand he is a *Gloucestershire-man*, and *Gloucestershire* is famous for having two great *Wits* born in it, instancing in *Sir Thomas Overbury*, and the *Cobler of Gloucester*; but sure the Captain was much mistaken in his comparison, and might have made as proper an one of a *Coach* and a *Wheel-barrow*.

This L. was a Captain for *Oliver* at *Ludlow*, where he once signaliz'd his *Valour* in leading his men up, and his *Wisdom* in running away, saving himself to do the State more service in his *Justice*ship, in which Office he domineer'd over far better men then himself, until the turning times turn'd him out; and since for his little wit, and less learning, he hath got himself the reputation of a *gifted man*, the Fame whereof hath already reach'd *London*, and is come to the ears of a certain *London Lady*, famous for being a *Princess* and *Patroness* of all *Conventicles* and *private Pulpiters*, who having heard of his incomparable

ble knack of *Canting*, takes him for a man of surpassing *Piety*, and Courts him by Letters for the familiarity of his acquaintance (as he himself hath told me) And further, that her *Ladiship* being informed by a *Shropshire* Colonel, (another Fanatick brain like himself) that the *dealings* of the Lord had been wonderful upon him in a Sicknels he once had, wrote a Letter to him, desiring to be satisfi'd how it was that the Lord dealt with him; whereupon he sent her a short Relation of it, but her *Ladiship* desiring to be more fully inform'd in all passages, he thereupon (as he told me) wrote some five sheets of the *dealings* of the Lord upon him, and sent it to her *Ladiship*, who contrary to my ambition, said he, intends to have it printed.

I am sorry the reputation of a Person of her Quality should be fully'd by giving credit to the false informations of *Canterers*, and *Pretenders to the Spirit*; wherefore to un-abuse her *Ladiship*, I make bold to tell it abroad, that those five sheets of paper so sent to the said Lady, have nothing in them but the figments of the Authors own crazed brains, and that those *Revelations, Visions, Dreams, Agonies*, and other *dealings* of the Lord upon him, which he may write of, are nothing but his extemporary non-sense, put into a little better method, according to the description of the said Colonel, *Farington*, and other pretenders to *Inspiration*, on purpose to please her devout *Ladiship*.

'Tis true, the Cap:ain took his Bed once upon a Surfeit of *Breef* and *Cabbage*, and probably might then dream the Devil came to torment him before his time; whereupon in's sleep he might implore help from Heaven, and awaking, tell the people he had seen a *Vision*, besides he might then perhaps belch out some pieces of *Canting*, and his silly Visitants might take these his *Erections* to be *Ejaculations*,

calations, and he himself might call these the *dealings of the Lord upon him*.

I had like to have said there is nothing can be spoken in commendation of this man, but considering that *Homer* commending some of his *Hero's*, calls them *Beef-eaters*: I must needs acknowledge the Captain to be praiseworthy, for I know him to be a terrible fellow at a piece of *Beef*.

The *Cobler* and he were so loving in life together, that 'twas pity they were divided in death; I have heard him deplore his death, saying, there's great loss of that *ingenious man*, meaning the *Cobler of Gloucester*, whom probably he might term ingenious, for that *Stratagem* he learnt of him, which was this:

The *Captain* once complain'd to the *Cobler*, that his house was so haunted with *Hobgoblin Justices*, that he could never keep a *Conventicle* in's house, without great danger of being disturb'd, desiring his advice in that case; whereupon the *Cobler* counsel'd him to make a Collection to buy *Cards and Dice* with, which might be always ready on the Tables, so that if those *uncircumcised Philistines*, the *Magistrates*, came upon them, they might leave *Preaching*, and fall to *Gaming*; meaning, the *Sisters* might hide *Gods books* in their *Plackets*, and fall to the *Devils*, the *Brothers*, might let a certain Tremulation, call'd the *Gentlemen's Palfie*, seize upon their *Elbows*, and every one take his turn at *Hazard*, and the *Speaker* might turn *Box-keeper*, and instead of *Hum, ha, and ho*, cry, *Six to four, seven to five*; so that their private *House of Prayer* being thus turn'd into a *Temple-Hall*, or *Speerings Ordinary*, that *Den of Thieves*, they might be secure enough from the *Magistrates*: And for this delusion it was that the *Captain* applauded him for an *ingenious man*.

Whosoever is desirous to see the works of the *Cobler* all
toget-

together, this *Captain* can satisfy his curiosity, but let him despair of getting any of them from him, for he would rather part with the *whole Duty of Man*, because it seems to be written by one of the Church of *England*, then the least parcel of the *Coblers* works.

The *Cobler* made him many Visits at his house, where he always found welcome both at Bed and Board, and never came thence empty handed, which made him like a true *Beggar* come the other, though 'twas a great distance from *Glocester*; but distance signifi'd nothing to the restless *Cobler*, for, like a *Gypsie*, he lov'd travelling, and never could endure to stay a fortnight in one place, in so much that he could not be said to inhabit any where: He would ramble *East, West, North, and South*, and find such Benefactors as the *Captain* in every quater, but in all his wanderings he avoided, as a Plague-infected House, the Habitation of any well-wisher to the Church of *England*, well knowing how unwelcome his lyce would be there: His custom lay all amongst malevolent *Conventiclers*, by whom alone he got his livelihood, and this was the reason he went so often to *Kidderminster*, that *Nursery* of Non-conformity, which was planted to be a reserve for men that may continually oppose the establish'd Government of the Church of *England*.

Here it was that the *Cobler* found his best *Masters* and *Mistresses*, who would readily take his scandalous *Pamphlets*, and lying *Libels* off his hands, striving who should gratifie him most with gifts and entertainments.

The *Cobler* knew what kind of Stories would best please those bad Natures, wherefore he never fail'd to offend truth, that he might humor them: He had always ready some false news or other about *Liberty of Conscience*, some Gibe or Jear upon *Episcopacy*, some false scandal upon a *Bishop*, some nick-name for a *Surplice*, some Roguish Jest upon the

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Satire; some lye of his own inventing upon a *Parson*, or some new-rai'd foul tale or other, tending to the disparagement of the Church, Court, or State, he never was furnish'd of, to make those bad natur'd people merry with, who gave a *Catholique Faith* to all the *Cobler* ever said. Here it was, as well as in other places, that the impudent *Cobler* slandered the Right Reverend *Bishop of Glocester*, amongst other scandals, with falsely interpreting *Grotius*. You see hereby that no man can write or speak so well, but some *Zoylus* or *Mamus* will rise up to find fault. *Plato*, *Aristotle*, *Virgil*, *Livie*, *Seneca*, and *Pliny*, were all carp'd at by some *Criticks* or other; *Horace* said that *Homer* dream'd sometimes; *Demosthenes* did not please *Tully* in all things; neither could the *Bishop of Glocesters* Interpretation of *Grotius* go free from being falsely censur'd by the more wicked then witty *Cobler*. *Osborn* was of Opinion, that ignorance would be the last thing subdu'd e're the dissolution of the Universe; wherefore I believe he would have apprehended the time to be very near, had he seen a *Cobler* write Books, and turn *Critick*, as this *Doctor of Divinity* *Ralph Wallis* did, making many false blows at *Episcopacy*, shooing many Fools Bolts against the Church, but never discharging one piece of Reason for whatever he said or did: The Emperor *Titus* (the delight of men) would complain he had lost that day on which he had done no good Office to any one; but this *Cobler* the abomination of mankind, thought he had spent that day ill, wherein he had not done some foul turn or other to the Church or Churchmen, for 'twas meat, and drink, and cloaths to him to do such kind of mischief; and if he did not soundly ply his wicked calling, the *Conventicle Leaders*, and other his factious *Masters* and *Mistresses*, held him up to the Law of the *Gymnosophists*, which denies meat to them that will not work, and would allow him neither meat nor wages; wherefore he diligently

diligently minded his business, which was lying and slandering, by which ungodly Trade he got his living where ere he came. But for my part, I think *Whores, High-way-men, Gamsters, and Pick-pockets*, get their lives by as warrantable courses.

Besides lying and slandering, he had also a *thievish* kind of profession which was very advantagious to him, for he did not only go snip with *Conventicle Leaders*, (as thieves and receivers do) for robbing the Church of its honor, and stealing mens hearts from it, but he would put himself upon the imployment of carrying the *Collections*, which *Quakers, Anabaptists, Independents, Presbyterians*, and other *Conventiclers*, gave to their poor or imprison'd *Fellow Rebels*, to strengthen them in their disobedience to the Laws of the *King*, and the *Church*; but instead of delivering what was sent, he commonly withheld either *all*, or the most part, for he would betray any trust to be true to himself.

For all these, and a thousand other villanies, who would ever have thought this same devillish *Cobler* should have (preternaturally to his deserts) dy'd of a *natural* death: he escap'd hanging indeed, but yet he return'd to the place from whence he came; for after his many weary journeys, and indefatigable pains-taking to do mischief, his *leg*, being fallen away with sore travel; his *tongue* faultring with continual telling lyes, and his *lungs* being wasted with perpetual bawling against the Church and Church-men, like old *Guy of Warwick*, he return'd to his Native Country, to end his Evening where he took his Morn.

At *Glocester* Death and the *Cobler* met, but he had fair warning of his coming, by a sickness which he took upon a monstrous supper of flesh one *Friday night*, about *Lent*, but for all that the *Cobler* had no mind to prepare himself for his death, for though he *did* send him a pious Exhortation to ask God for forgiveness of all the injuries and dishonors

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which with his wicked *tongue* and *pen* he had done his *Church* and *Ministers*, yet instead of repenting, he quite contrarily glori'd in what he had done, and as he liv'd so he was resolv'd to die, a *Rebel* to the *Church* and all goodnes; for he was so hardned through the success of his impieties, and his long impunity, that he either could not repent, or thought he had nothing to repent of; and he either thought all the lies and slanders he had rais'd upon the *Church* and *Churchmen*, were very *venial* sins, or by often telling them, and seeing them pass so currently for *truths*, he himself at last believ'd them to be so.

Death had many expostulations with him about's recovery, but considering that should he mend, yet he would never be better, and angry the world had been troubled with him so long, *Death* therefore took his *paring knife* and cut off the *itching ends* of the *Coblers* life,

This detestable *Cobler* (although he was *intestable* for his furious nature) a little ere he dy'd sent for a neighbouring *Baker*, who had a small faculty of writing, to make his *Will*, which the *Cobler* began to dictate, not in the Name of *God*, &c. least in any thing he should imitate a *Christian*; neither did he bequeath his Soul to his Maker, not being willing perhaps to rob the *devil* of his due; but he began, *I give to my Wife 500 l. to my Elder Daughter 200 l. to my Younger Daughter 200 l.* At which the *Baker* asked him where all this money was, telling him, he was glad he could leave his Wife and Children so well: To which the *Cobler* reply'd, *Neighbour, it is my Will that my Wife and Children should have so much, but if they cannot have it, I must die intestate; and so the Atheistical Rogue went out of the world, like Vespasian, with a Jest in's mouth.*

Though he bequeath'd 900 l. in's Will to his Wife and Daughters, yet he left them not 900 d. for he spent all his ungodly gains in's life time, and was of *Heliogabalus's* lavish mind,

mind, that it was best for a man to be his own *Heir*. But if any here wonder how it came to pass that the *Cobler* having so many wicked ways to thrive by, dy'd in so poor a condition, that a common *Executioner* would not have taken the pains to hang him for all he was worth, let him consider how the *Devil* uses to deal with *Witches*, *Gamesters*, *Highway-men*, and other his *Slaves*, seldome letting them die worth a *Groat*, or in their *Beds*, and he will be satisfi'd that *Satan* was very civil to his servant the *Cobler*, in letting him die neither of *hemp* nor *hunger*, but in a pair of *hempen* sheets, to put him in mind how well he had deserv'd hanging, which doubtless had fallen to his share, had that Law been in force in *England* which *Queen Amasis* once established in *Egypt*, whereby she punished as *Felons* all that could give no good account how they got their *livings*.

Some *Fanaticks* have said, that as sure as *God's* in *Glocester*, the *Cobler of Glocester's* gone to *Heaven*; yet considering that while he was alive, he *mar'd* more *souls* then ever he *mended*; and made more go *away* then ever he set *upright*; one may think it more probable, that if any one had been in the *whispering Vault* of *Glocester Church*, at the critical minute of his departure, he might have heard the *Devil* cry, *Room for the Cobler of Glocester*: whither his *Soul* is gone I am not bold enough to divine; but I am sure his *body*, which while he liv'd, nine *Counties* could scarcely contain, is now compris'd within nine foot of ground.

Having now brought this great *Minister* of the *Fanatick State* from his clay to his dust, I shall proceed to the description of his external parts, wherein I intend to be very circumstantial, and then make some enquiry into his *Internals*, not by way of *Augury*, as the *Romans* did into the intrals of their beasts (for we must allow the *Cobler* to be a kind of a rational creature) but to shew you how small a share he had of *Virtue*, by telling how much he had of its contrary.

For his person in general he was ugly, in particular any one might judge by his *dog-look*, that he lay lurching to play some *dog-trick* or other: In stature and shape he was made to run well, which agreed well with his itinerant employment; his complexion was of a Sun-burnt *Gipsie* colour, and his skin was rough and tawny, like *King's Bacon*; his hair was brown and bristly upon his head, but his locks were weather-turn'd, like a Barbers *Show Perwig*. The Scripture forbids the wearing of unseemly long hair, but the *Cobler* quite contrarily wore unseemly short hair, not out of his great fear to offend the Text, but out of his great feud to Decency, which by all means, like a true *Non-conformist*, he avoided, least he should be suspected for one of the *Church of England*, and so be taken for a Christian: But for all his hair was thus short and unseemly, he was as proud of it, as *Commodus* and *Ælius Verus* were of their hair powdered with the Radinents of Gold.

His cloaths were always out of fashion, and every part of his Habit was as much a *Non-conformist* to the *Mode*, as he was to the *Church*, and he lov'd Uniformity in nothing but deformity, doing what he could by Art to make himself more deform'd then he was by Nature: But I know not to what purpose, except as the Emperour *Caracalla*, having the vanity to fancy himself to be like *Alexander the Great*, did all he could, by holding his neck awry, and imitating other his postures to resemble him; so the *Cobler* might do all he could to look ugly, that he might thereby represent the *Devil*.

Plato was of Opinion, that Souls unwillingly departed out of fair bodies, and on the contrary, wherefore I wonder that the *Coblers* Soul left not his body sooner, for 'twas so foul, that it might well be called the *Sepulchre* of his Soul.

The *Cobler* being thus foul, it was no wonder his actions were

were no fairer, for the shape of the body commonly bears the similitude of the mind; and therefore we may say of him, as *Aristophanes* said of *Philotes*, that his actions were foul because his person was, and the reason why he was as bad as a *Witch*, in doing much harm, and no good, was because he was as foul as a *Witch*.

Having thus done with the *Coblers* Shape and Habit, I proceed to his Diet, wherein a man would judge he was very temperate, considering how little it cost him; but the truth is, he eat much, and paid little, feeding for the most part at *publick* entertainments; he would be as constantly at *Conventicle Feasts*, as a *needy* Gallant at my *Lord Mayors*: Besides, he was a great frequenter of *private Christnings*, *Clandestine Marriages*, *Night-burials* of *Non conformists*, and other occult Solemnities, at which the *Coblers* presence was very necessary, especially in helping to steal a Corps into a hole in a *Church-yard*, which he would do with such secrecie, that the *Parson* and *Sexton* should be robb'd of their Fees, and the Corps of its *Christian Burial*, for which he got many a Meals Meat, and now and then some of the Deceaseds old cloaths.

He had also many other invitations by *Non-conformists*, which he never refused; and if at any time he was invited to two places at once to dinner, he was not so modest as a certain voracious *Doctor*, who in such a case is us'd to *dine* at the one place, and *sup* at the other, but the *Cobler* would both *dine* and *sup* at each place; nay, he was so liberal of his company at a dinner or supper, that rather then not accept of an invitation, he would commonly invite himself bringing a *stomack* with him as large as his *conscience*; and all the while he was at's meat, by his good will he would not speak one word but what his *belly* prompted him to; but when that was once fill'd, he would scarce let any one have a word with him.

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He generally lov'd all Meats that were good; but especially his appetite was most fixt upon *Bacon*, of which food he eat so much, and so often, that as *Fabius* had his Name from the *Latin* word of *Beans*, *Piso* from that of *Pease*, and *Lentulus* from that of *Lentiles*, for the love they severally bore to those respective kinds of food; and as Captain *L.* is call'd Captain *Beef*, because of his great stomach to that Dish, even so the *Cobler*, instead of *Ralph Wallis*, might have been call'd *Ralph Bacon*, for his great appetite to it; but he would have been better *Bacon*, if according to his deserts he had been hang'd.

In drink the *Cobler* was usually sparing when it cost him any thing, but if it came in free-cost, like other *Non-conformists*, he would drink until he was of *Copernicus's* Opinion, that the World went round.

In ancient History we may read, how *Anacreon* was choak'd with the *Husk* of a *Grape*, and *Fabius* the *Prætor* with a *hair* in a draught of *milk*; and I have read in the *punny Chronicles*, of one choak'd with a *Cheef-cake*, and another with the *rump* of a *Chicken*, but the last two might have been alive to this day, could they have swallow'd as well as the *Cobler*, for with *bawling* against the *Bishops*, and eating *Bacon*, he had made his throat so wide and slippery, that neither meat, drink, nor lyes could ever choak him.

Of Constitution he was strong and hardy, else he could not have kept his flesh so well upon his travel, yet he was not fat, but in fine travelling order, for though both when he rested, and when he was upon's journeys, he never fell from's meat, yet his continual beating upon the Hoof did keep down his flesh; but for all that he was in good heart, until Death found'd him.

The *Cobler* was also of a bold and daring spirit, which was a result of his poverty, for having little to loose, he ventur'd far to get something, but had he had wealth, reputation,

tation, place, or any plentiful dispensation of birth or Fortune, he would have been more cool in's courage against the *Laws*, and not have hazarded the loss of his *possessions*, by so often offending against them: But he was none of *Fortunes Darlings*, for like *Bias*, he carry'd all's wealth about him, and yet never fear'd robbing or confiscation.

The *Cobler* thus having little to loose, had the less to fear; and therefore 'twas, that where hope of gain incourag'd him he was so bold in doing mischief, for he was clearly of *Vespasian's* mind, that *gain* was sweet, though got by never so foul means; and out of this Principle it was that he never blush'd for any Villany that ever he committed, at least he was never seen to blush, for that was impossible, because of the *brownness* of his complexion, which was enough to obfuscate the *Vermilion* of his modesty, had he been owner of any: But, for my part, I think he was as much a stranger to that graceful Quality, as to any kind of honesty.

As the *Coblers* Spirits never fled to his face for shame, so neither did they ever retire to his heart for fear; for as *Heligabalus* in his Oration to the Whores of *Rome*, admonisheth them by all means *Ut frigiditatem ex cordibus & pudorem ex mentibus penitus extirperent*, so the *Conventicle Leaders*, and other the *Coblers Instigators*, might (not improbably) injoyn him to renounce all modesty and *pusillanimity*, in executing his mischievous Function: But for all that, he stood not so stoutly to his base principles, but that he once gave back at *Kirdderminster*; where, as he was practising his Rogueries once, Order was given to apprehend him; at which, together with his guilt, he was struck into such a *Panique* fear, that leaving his Horse behind him, he shew'd himself an excellent Foot-man, flying for Religion to the House of a certain *Captain*, and
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Brother *Saint* of his, where he found none at home but the *Saintess*, who not only congratulated his Escape, but was ready to have protected him from further danger, by hiding him under her very Coats, if need were.

How familiar they were I know not, but I am sure I have heard the Captain say, that finding this precious *Saint* at his house, when he came home, he not only got his horse releas'd, but at parting gave him half a Crown, thanking him for being so kind as to visit his Wife in his absence.

Some by their Hospitality to Strangers, have unawares entertained *Angels*; but this *Captain*, and his Wife, did wittingly entertain the Devillish *Cobler* of *Glocester*.

The *Cobler* was very well advis'd in taking Sanctuary at the *Captains* House, which (besides the advantage of its commodious Scituation by a *Wood*) is built for the many Trap-doors and private passages in and out, like that house which *Prusias* King of *Bithinia* gave *Hannibal* the *Carthaginian*, after *Scipio* conquer'd him, to secure himself in, from the surprizals of the *Romans*, his own Country not daring to conceal him.

In a word, this House of the *Captains* is every way so cunningly contrived, as though he designed it, either for a Receptacle to such *Rogues* as the *Cobler* was, or for himself to sculk in, or make his Escape out of, in case his endeavours fail him in some bad designs he is thought to have in hand: And another argument he secures himself from such a Chance is, his holding his Lands, Livings, and all that ever he by hook or crook is worth, in other mens Names.

For this *Captain Religion*, if we take his own word for't he's a *Latitudinarian* taking up that denomination perhaps from the immensity of his Conscience, and so he may as well call himself a *Longitudinarian*, but however he may gloss upon himself in plain English he's a *Leveller*, that wo'ud with all his heart have the present power planed that he might insult over is again.

He is much of the nature of the *Cobler of Gloucester* in opprobrious Language against the Government of the Church of *England*, and railing against the decent Ceremonies thereof, in so much that the loss of the *Atlantick Cobler* in those parts will be the lesse, so long as this *Herculian Captain* is a live to support the Fanatick faction.

He has all the false news of *Liberty of Conscience*, being granted, much of which is, of his own raising, and he is continually talking of the necessity of such a toleration, being prompted to it by the Advantage he proposes to himself thereby: nay he is so vehement for it, that like other self aiming *Non conformists* he lays all the misfortunes of the Nation and miscarriages of State to the want of it. So have I heard him hypocritically bewail the misery, he said the Countrey was like to fall into in that the Cattle went not off this Summer, and this he gave for a reason.

The *King* (quoth he) having put out a Proclamation against *Conventicles*, the *Non conformists* who (said he) have got all the Money of the Kingdom into their hands, have thereupon called in all their money, being resolved to put out no more untill such time as *Liberty of Conscience* shall be granted, whereupon the *Grassers*, about *London* failing of their usuall supplies of money upon Interest from the money'd *Non conformists*, cannot take the Cattle off the *Drovers* hands, who by consequence can buy no more from the Countrey *Farmers* who by consequence cannot pay their Rent, and by consequence must be begger'd. By this kind of argumenta-

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tion he went about to prove the Lands misery, but what half-witted man would not deny his argument, well knowing that the onely reason why Cattle went not off in the Countrey this Summer was for want of graze about London. He indeavoured also to prove the reason of the decay of *Trading and Merchandizing* in the Nation to be onely the want of *Liberty of Conscience* by such like frivolous arguments which can make no impression upon either wise or honest people, but by this means the *Malleable* vulgar are stirred up to oppose the Laws by Calumniating words and illegall assemblies, which otherwise would live quietly under the Government, imputing their mis-fortunes to more probable causes. And this is the constant practice of *Conventicle-leaders* to bring an odium upon the Government, and make their *Mundungos* doctrine take the better amongst their deluded followers whose brains being over heated by the *sulphurious* reports of their *Hot-headed Leaders*, they can judge no better what is meant by all that zealous preaching they hear then a *feaverish* pallat can relish the true gusto of the Meat it tastes, but as some take *bad Tobacco* commending it for the best, so the ears of *Conventiclers* do greedily drink in the doctrine of their *saßious* leaders, and their faith swallows it for the best, not discerning the *Gunpowder* that's in it to blow up Church and State.

Much might be said of this *Captain* to shew you what an admirer he was of the *Cobler* but I on purpose omit him to make some conjectures of the *Coblers* Religion, which truly was so *Mongrel* like that I know not what to call him. He joyn'd himself to *Independants, Anabaptists, Quakers and Presbyterians*, and agreed with them all in railing against the times and crying down the authority of them in rule. He something resembled a *Jew*, also in his malice to Christian Church Men, but his *Bacon* devouring principle may satisfie all the World he was no *Jew*.

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Some thought he might be a *Jesuite* coulling under the shape of a *Cobler*, becauſe he would ſo cunningly inſtillate lyes unto mens unwary hearts; but truly he never ſhewed himſelf *Papiſtly* affected in any thing except in bearing a perpetual grudge to the Church of *England*, and he was ſo far from being of that Church, which like a painted *Whore* is all for ceremonies that quite contrarily he favour'd thoſe Churches moſt which like dirty fluts were for no ceremonies at all, beſides his *illetterature* might ſecure him from the ſcandal of being a *Jefuite*, for though he had polluted many books with his *piſch* thumbs, and continually poring upon them, yet he could not arrive to any perfection in his *Mother* tongue, for all his writing too, he was ſtill a *Cobler*, and though he confidently courted *Minerva* yet ſhe conſtantly ſlighted him, diſdaining to frame a *Mercury* out of a degenerate wooden *Cobler*, or to ſet her Jewels ſo plain as in the dull *Spirit* of a baſe *Mechanick*, ſhe ſcorn'd to dignifie him with a *Cothurne* or *Buſkin*, whoſe converſation had been more with old *Boots* then *Books*. This mov'd his *Traciſcible* faculty againſt her *Minions*, and becauſe ſhe would not vouchſafe him her favours, he therefore villify'd them in others; to ſpeak more plain the *Cobler* contemn'd learning in others, becauſe he found it wanting in himſelf, ſaying it was invented by conjurors and *Papiſts*, and that *Languages* were nothing but the *confuſion* of *Babel*, but all his ſeud againſt learning and learned men aroſe from nothing but the deſect of that graceful qualification in himſelf. So it is an ordinary thing for deformed perſons to deſpiſe beauty (that *very glorious gift* of the *Gods* as *Homer* calls it) in others, calling it pride, and effeminate neſs, when as they themſelves wou'd be much more proud had they any thing to be proud of; and ſo there are many upſtant *conventicle* Leaders, generated out of *Mechanicks* or *Tradefmen*, who having that baſe quality of the *Devil*, to wiſh all in as bad a condition as themſelves, would willing-

ly have all as ignorant of learning as they are, and hence it is that they cry out so loud against the *Rhetorical Divines* of the Church of *England*, crying up plainness of speech altogether and all out of a conscious knowledge of their own defects.

It's strange to me that these Men should parallell themselves with *Paul* as they usually do, when as they are nothing like him, for whereas *Paul* was said to be mad for his much learning, these men may be said to be mad for their little learning, yet they make the *Spiris* (like occult qualities) a shelter from the suspicion of their ignorance. They hate the succinct brevity of the *Laconick* dialect, because 'tis out of their reach, and admire *Cicero* for his long wind, but not for his eloquence, because they cannot imitate it. They despise the orders of the Church of *England*, and undervalue men in *degrees*, because they were never capable of orders nor degrees. They speak against *Universities*, because they were no members of them, saying *Papery*, is taught there taking that advantage perhaps from several books of *Philosophy &c.* Which were written by *Roman Catholics*, and so the *Cobler* took occasion to say once of *All Souls Colledge* in *Oxford*, that it was a Colledge of *Papists*, either because there are so many *civil Lawyers* there, whom he took to be limbs of the *Pope*, or because of the painted Chappel, where he might see *Saint Laurence* pictured with his *Grid-Iron* whom perhaps he might take to be some *Popes Red Herring Broiler*, and this alone is enough to convince all the World he was no *Jesuite*.

Some thought he might be a *Quaker* for his contempt of Magistrates but he differ'd from that sect in that it was not against his principles to swear, for when he broach'd any lye upon the Church or Church men, to make it gain the more credit he wou'd ordinarily aver the truth of it upon his conscience, a thing he could never remember himself owner of,
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yet he wou'd swear by it, just as if *Quintilla* should have sworn by her *Virginity*, whereas she had been so long an *Whore*, that she could never remember her self a *Maid*.

For my part I incline to believe he was a *Presbyterian* for these two reasons, first because he wou'd lie and slander like that old caluminator the *Devil*, and secondly because of his obstinate humour to resist any command, though never so legally injoyn'd and this he shew'd to the very last in his earnest request that he might by no means be buried in *Flamin*, for no other reason then to manifest his contempt of the Law.

I am now quite tired with this everlasting subject the *Cobler*, but ere I end with him I cannot omit to tell you what was in his great and high disdainful mind to have effected ere he dy'd; and truly as *Ovid* complains to *Augustus* that it griev'd him more then his Exile to be banished ere he had finished a work he had begun even so it vext the *Cobler* more then his death to be cut off ere he had accomplished the design he had in hand, which was this. The *Cobler* having it predicted to him either by his own false spirit, or by some of the self designing Jesuitically principled conventicle Leaders, that the present *Parliament* upon this their present meeting would be dissolved, had designed to gallop, go, ride, and run oyer all parts to stir up the people to give their votes for such new *Parliament men* as would be sure to pass the Bill for such a toleration; to this intent he was resolv'd to undergo all pains and perils, by posting up and down to carry the conventicle Leaders impious exhortations, to scatter their pamphlets or use any other wicked means he should be put upon by those his instigators, who having that one absurdity of *Liberty of conscience*, once granted them, know very well that a toleration of all their gilded impieties will of necessity follow.

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Doubtless the *Cobler* had been a stout stickler for them in this project, had not envious death robb'd them, and the Gallows of him, but for all he's gone, there are many *conventicle Leaders*, who have proceeded in this design with such success, that they make no question but a little time will effect what they so much affect.

That they may get this millerious, but profitable thing call'd *Liberty of conscience* conceded, they have, and do still practice the Method of the *Devil* tempting the Frailty of the *Wives*, who being deluded her self commonly draws her Husband in to be a Fool with her for company.

They know very well 'tis no hard matter to deceive *filly women* whose sex hath ever been Famous for credulity and devotion and therefore it is that as the *Devil* began with *Eve* to beguile *Adam*, so they first set upon the *Wives* with their dissembled piety that they may more easily gain the *Husbands* to their side, who either out of *Love* cannot, or *fear* dare not deny the demands of their *Wives* though never so impertinent, but give their votes for a *toleration* abroad because fore'd to it at home.

They easily lead away captive *filly women*, who being no less fond of strange *Doctrines* then they are of strange flesh, do more readily admit them into their hearts, houses, purses, and beds, but men being of sollider Judgements and deeper understandings do not so readily submit, their reasons to be tyranniz'd over by *conventicle Leaders* but discern their fraudulancy through some crany or other of their self ended dissimulation, hence it is that look into any conventicle you find so few Men and so many Women.

Mather Shipton prophecy'd that seven women should follow one man, but behold here's a greater wonder come to pass in our time for now a days its an ordinary thing to see not 7 but *sevenscore* women follow one single simpleton that can but pretend to the Spirit and talk Familiarly with his Maker.

These

These Women that make conventicles well thus, are for the most part either discontented wives, melancholly widows or stale Maids who for their foul shapcs, ill looks and worse conditions despair of ever having Husbands; having been cross'd in their loves or thwarted in their ambition they presently turn abandoners of the World, and as in Italy, such run into *Cloysters*, so in England into *conventicles*; they first run out of their wits for love, jealousy or anger, and then run out of the Church to the next *conventicle Leaders*, who by their strict profession of zeal for liberty of Conscience, and cunningly applying texts of Scripture, to their Fancies possess them in such sort that the power'ul word of God assisted with the Rhetorick of Divines is not of efficacy sufficient to reclaim them to the Church, but they cry they have soft hearts and tender consciences when alas all their tenderness and softness lyes in their heads, and they may be better cur'd by *Doctor Graves*, *More-fields Physick* then any *Doctors Divinity*.

The men that resort to these *conventicles* for the most part either want wit, honesty or Government over their wives, I need not say much of their dispositions, for by the sign that nature hath hung out conjecture may be made what qualities they have within, there are few good countenances amongst them and therefore few good conditions are to be expected from them you may ordinarily see discontent or Posity in their looks, and for my part I can say that I scarce ever beheld an ingenious Face amongst them, neither can the *conventicle Leaders* boast of many handsome *sebe Profites* amongst them, of their's not one of them can say as *Juno* did to *Æolus*, *sunt mihi bis Septem puellanti corpore Nymphae*.

But theirs many of them can say *sunt mihi bis centum deformi corpore Verna*.

I remember I have read of a good Pope in former time, who seeing some *British* Captives expos'd to sale at *Rome*, was mov'd with pitty that so handsome shap'd and well complecti-

plecion'd people had not the light of the *Gospel* amongst them, and thereupon sent some over into *Brittanny* to instruct them in *Christianity*, but I believe that had they been no better aspected nor handsomely compos'd then those which *conventicles* for the most part consist of, he would not have been so enamour'd of their persons as to wish their souls so well.

As the bodies of all *conventicles* are generally deform'd so the *Major* part of the heads of them are but *Minors* in comeliness for my part I know few *conventicle* Leaders so handsome that if I met them in a morning I might presage to my self good luck that day, as the *Romans* us'd to do when they met comely persons, but rather I should judge the meeting of one of these *scarcrow* Divines faridical as *Septimus severus* did the meeting of a *Blackamoor*, but their aspect is not so terrible to me as to hear them so frequently bawling in *Conventicles*, for considering that these kind of Ravens croack'd mighty loud before that shower of blood fell in our Land, it may be an omen that the like deluge is now threatned.

If we strictly inquire into the originals of these *conventicle* Leaders, which make all this ado in the Nation; we shall find that more of them came out of the four and twenty companies then *Universities*, and that more belong to *Halls* then *Colledges* who becoming *free men* in Divinity, ere they had serv'd an apprenticeship in the *University*, because they cannot now keep open shop, are turn'd *Journey men* prayers and preachers to as many as are so mad as to hire them. These men have for the most part but little wit, but they have the fortune to perswade others to have as little sense as themselves they wigggle themselves into favour with a company of *Petticoat* converts, and think they have power to lead about a Sister or a Wife, as well as *Paul*, ask any of them how they dare be so bold as to preach and they are ready to say with *Paul*, *Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel*, but woe is unto the Gospel, for

for being Preach'd by such as these, and may not they as well prove the Lawfulness of their Cheating the World from *Jacobs cheating his brother Esau*? They are fuller of Texts then Proofs, yet they will make pretty fond interpretations of Scripture to tickle the minds of their Profelutes, and very cunningly wrest a Scripture to defend their unwarrantable practices by, but the *Devil* had his *Scriptum est* as well as they.

They have the voice of *Tragadians*, and the gesture of *Comedians*, and act the *Hypocrite* to the life. They ramp and tear in the Pulpit as though they wou'd pull their Maker out of Heaven, and keep such a bawling in their Prayers, as though they either bid defiance to the Magistrates, or thought God was not amongst them; but when they pray for the King, they fall their voice as though they were afraid their Prayers should reach Heaven, and I believe that their praying for the King is but as an honest Parson once pray'd for *Oliver*, who in's prayer said; *And since O Lord we are commanded to pray for our Enemies, we beseech thee to be merciful to the Lord Protector*, leaving him thus like a Plague infected House, with a *Lord have mercy upon him*.

Others there are of the *Conventicle-Leaders*, that have Learning indeed, but withall some humour or other, that (as the *wild Gourds* spoil'd the porridge) marreth all: They are peremptory in asserting their own Opinions, not caring what Troubles or Combustions they raise in the Church, so that they can but maintain their own fancies.

Others are of strange complaining humours, obstinate, pettish, froward, and as various as the *Neutrum modo, modo modo vulgus*, no Government or Governours can please them long, but they will continually find fault.

Some men are for all times, but these men I am now speaking of are against all times. They wish'd for the *Rightfull Monarch* e're they had him, and now they have

him they wou'd live *Anarchically* under him : The truth is, they are men compos'd of nothing but *Discord*, and therefore 'tis no marvel if the *Vocal and Instrumental Harmony* of the Church cannot recreate them ; they are of *black melancholy* Constitutions, and therefore no wonder if a *white Surplis* offend them. They know that their Sermons wou'd be no more the worse, if preach'd in a Surplis, than the last *Lord Mayors* Dinner wou'd have been if he had entred the Temple with his Sword down, yet they stand upon their *punctilios*, and rather then be constrain'd to come to the Lord's Table in *clean Linnen*, they'l in a slyingly way make a private meal in a Chamber, and there's many of their followers that will refuse the bread of Life, if not served up after their own nasty way.

Others there are of these *Conventicle-Leaders*, and that a very considerable number, who encourag'd through the hope of gain and preferment, engag'd themselves so far in fomenting the late Rebellion, that they think they cannot in honour now come back ; besides, what wou'd their followers say, who have known them *Rebells* formerly, should they now turn honest men ? Yet there's some of them could withall their hearts shake hands, and be friends with the Church of *England*, could the World as clearly forget, as the King hath mercifully forgiven, what they have done against it. This is the party there is most danger of ; for the others only feed upon the Ulcers of the times, and like *Physicians*, are best in *Distemper'd* times : But these stand stiffly to their Old base principles, and do all they can to bring all into Confusion again. They are immoderate in their Demands, and high in their Carriage, as though they meant to make the Church compound for its Peace, and the King for his Quiet, upon their own terms : Ask them to condescend to any proposal, and they are resolv'd before hand to deny it, like *Alexander the Great*, who swore to the Ambassadors of the *Lamp-saceni*

facem before-hand, that he wou'd do every thing contrary to what they requested. And this nature they sufficiently manifested in their peremptory Carriage, in the Treaty at the *Savoy*, where the *Bishops* met them with Arms open, ready to imbrace them, but they behav'd themselves so there, as though their main business were either to obtain a denial in their Demands, or to tell the *Bishops* plainly that it was as much in vain for them to expect that they would ever be friends to the *Church of England*, as for the *Romans* to have hop'd for peace from *Hannibal*, when as he had sworn to be their perpetual Enemy; nay, further should the *Bishops* have descended to ask them, wherein they might do them any acceptable office, assuring them their requests should end in no denial. I believe, there were some of that Legation, from the Disaffected party, could with all their hearts have answered as *Demochares*, one of the *Athenian Ambassadors*, did *King Philip of Macedon*, in such a case, telling him that the only way for him to please the *Athenians*, was to take a Rope and hang himself.

They so exercise their Enmities against the Church of *England*, that they leave no room for Reconciliation; and that *Exclamation* in *Homer*, seems to be the *Motto* of their inclinations to the Church.

Aut tu me tollas, aut ego te.

They are a sort of *Animals, fera natura*, they are gone from the Church, *sine animo revertendi*, like *Noah's Dove*, they went out from it, but like *Noah's Raven*, they will never return again: They have the ambition of *Cesar*, for they wou'd rather be the *Heads* of *Conventicles*, than the *second men* in the Church of *England*. They say now they are for the *King*, but 'tis but just like the unfortunate *Essex's*, crying out for the *Queen*; 'tis true, they wou'd have

the King reign, but 'tis with this *proviso*, that they may rule.

The *Christians* of old, wanted not power but will to free themselves from the Tyrannous persecutions of the *Heathens and Infidells*, but these kind of *Christians* want not will but power to throw off the legal Instructions of the Magistrates of Church and State, who are their fellow-*Christians*, and never offended them, but in their desire to amend them.

They are too ambitious to be Devout, and all their strict profession of Zeal, Justice and Piety, is for nothing, but to disguise their secret and ambitious self-ends; all their crying down the *Bishops* is out of no other design than that they may come up, and to this end alone it is that by their scandalous imputations and false suggestions sometimes in Conventicles, and alwayes in private conferences, they daily detract from their honour, and represent them to their abused followers unworthy the places they hold. They slander their Actions, deride their Vesture, and do what they can to lessen their Authority, that they may thereby (like true *Sophisters of Hell*) undermine the power of the *Prince*.

They Nick-name the vertues of the *Bishops* with vitious imputations, calling their provident saving for the repair of their Palaces, Families and Relations (which were ruin'd, decay'd, and begger'd by such hollow-hearted *Machiavillians* as themselves) sordid Coverousness, and the liberality of others, extravagant profuseness; and such a construction as this have some of them made of the *Arch-Bishops*. Munificence in erecting to so good an intent that *stately Pile at Oxford*, saying of it like *Judas*, to what end's all this wast? might not the *Arch-Bishop* have expressed his liberality more piously in rebuilding so many Churches, as the money thrown away upon that *Play-house* (as they call it) would have done; not that they care for Churches, so long as they
are

are under Episcopal Government, any more than Judas did for the poor, but that they may have them ready built to their hands against they come to be *Masters*, which they hope shortly to be, and to this end alone it is that, *Maluit allatrare Episcoporum famam, quam imitari eorum virtutes, sed quam parum hæc conveniunt cum officio hominis Christiani cui nihil legavit servator noster præter pacem suam et charitatis commendationem.* Two of our *Conventicle-leaders* *John Ball*

The *Monks and Fryers* in the dawning of the Reformation, that they might beat down the reputation of the reformed Churches, and keep their own scabb'd flock together, told in their Sermons that the *Hereticks* (as they call'd them of the Reformed Churches) did in their meetings eat Children, and such like *Bug-bear-tales*, whereby they inrag'd their abused followers more violently against them: and such like *Jesuitical* practices do the *private Gospellers* now adays use to derogate from the Obedience due to the *Venerable Fathers* of the Church, they have alwayes ready some false definition of *Episcopacy* that it is nothing but a new word for *Pope-y*, or of the *Common-prayer*, that it is nothing but the *Mass in English*, or as *Blaky the conventicle leader* said of it in his Scotch tone, that it was good for nothing but to light a pipe of Tobacco with. And many other unchristian means they have to bring an Odium upon the Government and Governours of the Church, by which their mislead *Proselytes* are so inflam'd against them, that the men could find in their hearts like *Samson* to burn all the standing Corn rather than the *Philistine* Church-men should have a tenth part of it, and the Women, if Hemp were hard to come by, wou'd readily, like the *Carthaginian Matrons*, cut their hair to make Ropes to hang them, but wou'd pawn their Rings, Bodkins, and Thimbles, to supply their own factious *Prachers*. And I believe there's some of these self-seeking *Conventicle-leaders* cou'd wish as *Caligula did of Rome*, that all the Bishops had but

but one Neck, but yet have hypocrisie enough to cloak their wicked minds with a pretence of zeal for Reformation, which they seem so piping hot with, as though like *Porcia*, they had swallow'd burning Coals, or cou'd spit fire like a Juggler in the faces of them that oppose it, but for all their *Sulphurous Zeal*, which like *Aetna*, they breath out now for Religion, it is my opinion they would not burn with the like ardour, shou'd they come to power (which God forbid.) These are the men so cry'd up for true piety and Devotion now a dayes; *Ita enim judicat hoc incipiens et inficetum seculum, eos solos vero zelo censi oportere, qui intemperanter debacchantur in eos qui iisdem sacris sunt initiati, et in plerisque servant eadem doctrinam extra paucissimos articulos, quibus ad liquidum pervisigandis impar est mens imbecillitas Mortalium, in quibus sobria simplicitas et ingenua fragilitatis suae notitia confessioque vincit manem sui fiduciam et periculosam sciendi curiositatem.*

If we strictly inquire into all these *Conventicle-leaders* course of living, for all their oral sanctity and heavenly looks, we shall find that they are but *Men* subject to eating and drinking as well as the *Cobler*. They have not the guift of not erring themselves, for all their freeness to censure others. For all their Meager vissages and thin jaws (which are but results of their pale envy and black melancholy) like *Pharaoh's lean kine*, they devour the fat things of the Land. They have not altogether the continence of *Sophocles*, nor the sobriety of the *Sabines*, but in some measure the Luxury of *Lucullus*, neither are they so moderate in their pleasures of the flesh, as some think they are. Though they sometimes after a full meal fast all day, yet for the most part they feast the night following, eating and drinking like *French Ordinary men*. Their praying and preaching in a house seems to me but like one of their tedious Graces before their Feasts, for come into any day conventicle or night Assembly

assembly and you may hear the *fack wherring*, which is the measure of their discourse instead of an hour-glass, and so their exercises are longer or shorter according to the quality of the meat that's roasting. If a *Chine* or a *Surloyn* of *Bief* be at the fire, it will force the speaker to repetition ere it be ready, and make him sweat and drop like it, ere it be enough roasted, but then he gets some *Cordial draught* or other to keep his melted grease from his heart.

These men have not drank of the *Chisterian Fountain*, that they should be so much out of *Charity* with *Wine*, as they would have the *World* believe, but, to it come not from the *Kings head* or the *Miter*, they'll drink it though it come from the *Devil Tavern*: and some of them with *Old Curo*, will now and then take a cup too much.

Did they so much abhor *Wine*, as they pretend, their followers wou'd not be so ready to present them with whole baskets of it as they are. For my part I believe there's some of them love good *Wine* so well, that if I heard them bewail the loss of *Sandia*, I should not judge it altogether, because a branch of *Christendom* is lost off, but in a great measure, because the *Wine destroying Turk*, hath destroyed all *Muskadine Vines*, which were us'd to yield them such fine preparative and restorative draughts, yet they may undergo that loss with the more patience as long as their Enemy the *Turk* is withheld from the *Canary Islands*, for sack taken in a larger quantity is as good for a *long-winded Saint* as *Muskadine*. I will not stand to particularize upon these *Conventicle-leaders*, as the *Cobler* did upon the *Clergy* of the *Church of England*, but I say of them in general that their Souls, dwell in their senses, and the beastly commendation of eating and drinking well is proper to them all. They have nothing in them that distinguishes them from other men, but an affected impudence and studdy'd hypocrisy, with which they blear the eyes of the *World*, and dissemble themselves into

into people's houses, eating and drinking so long upon their cost, that they have brought the Tap of some of their Estates upon sloop. They are true devourers of Widows houses, and all of them make a gain of their pretended Godliness: though they seem by their zealous Preaching to aim at nothing more than the good of their Proselyte's Souls, yet they intermix that Doctrine amongst it. That those that preach the word, should live by the word, by vertue of which Text that canting Grocer in Tuttle-street layes claim to a share of that money which was left to be distributed by five pounds a piece to such a number of Conventicle-leaders, who with their Magical zeal had infatuated a certain Zealot to make his Testament *ad tales impias causas*.

Gain is the Mistress they all Court, and all their Devotion tends to that center. This alone makes them so boldly to hazard being imprison'd, for by throwing themselves into prison they gain as much as the *Broken-Aldermen*. For their followers, feed them so with contributions and presents when they are in Custody, that the Magistrates cannot do them a greater injury than to release them.

I have heard among this party, that one of them got above two hundred pounds by his weekes Imprisonment, but yet desir'd his Liberty, because probably it is more advantageous to him, and he attain'd it by vertue of *Prevencation*, which set an Offender taken in the manner at Liberty, for want of a little formality in his commitment, but what said Oliver St. John to the Earl of Strafford, pleading for the benefit of the Law. *Frustra legis auxilium implorat qui contra legem peccat*, and further said he, *Foxes and Wolves are to be knock'd on the head as they are found*. Put are not these men liker to Foxes, who with the fire-brands of their Zeal put all into combustions.

And westminster-Hall had need beware that they run not Littleton up into as narrow a Room, as it has run *Justinian*:
for

for these men aim to have all Laws be given from the Pulpit.

It is best that all beware of these *Sodalitates* in time, for there have been too many fatal accidents by them to teach all men the danger of security, and it is manifest that they have prov'd as destructive to Common-wealths as the *Bacchanals of Rome and Athens*. And if the followers of these *Conventicle-leaders* wou'd but open their eyes they might discern that the good preaching they hear is us'd to ends, that many of them will be asham'd to own.

But they are still blinded either by their own self-wills, or by the mist of piety, which their leaders cast before their eyes, by which means they can no better judge between good and evil intentions, than Children looking through a green or red prospective, can discern the true colour of the object they behold.

These men counterfeit Divines so well, that 'tis hard to know them from such, but an *Ape's an Ape*, though it be like a man, and who with *Agésilas* would not refuse to hear one counterfeit a Nightingal when they can hear the Nightingal her self.

Thus much I have made bold to say of *Conventicle-leaders*, because some of them were the *Instigators*, and all the *Approvers* of what the wicked Cobler said or did to the scandal of the Church and Church-men, and were not I afraid of bringing a swarm of Wasps about my ears. I could give a more particular account what they are, what they design, why they swarm so, like *Padua Doctors*, about Lon-

don, in so much that there's above *twenty* of them in one Parish, pestring the City worse than ever *Venice* was with *Jesuites*. Much I could say, and not wrong truth, as they by the mouth of the *Cobler* did, for they us'd him but like as the Devil did his Images in former times, but I am afraid I have said more than I shall be thank'd for by the factious Conventiclers and Conventicle-leaders: yet if any of that progeny of *Momus*, blame me for sharpness of humour against them, I tell them that *præservida et ignea eorum ingenia, quæ nihil evomunt in ecclesiam præter atroces minas et inexpiabiles iras, hanc justam mihi moverunt bilem*. And that my tender Conscience would not permit me to Court their baseness with respect, and I hope they will not deny me liberty of Conscience. I have said nothing of them but what I either know or believe in my Conscience, wherefore I desire, that they, who are so strongly bent for toleration, would grant me my free opinion amongst them.

If they blame me for taking their dead *Lyon the Cobler* by the beard, and speaking so ill of him now he's gone. I answer, it was because I never either heard or knew any better of him while he was alive: neither would I have foul'd any paper with him, or troubled my self to ransack his life thus to the infamy of *Non-conformists* (against whom I have not an irreconcilable enmity) but that I could not indure a *President* of so high a nature should pass unregistered, or not taken notice of. *Procopius* in his Book *de bello Persico* tells us how *Theophilus* finding the Image of an Ape which the *Persians* worshipped for a God, set it up in a publick place, least it should be denied in Ages to come, that the *Gentiles* once had such a God; and so I lighting upon *Ralph Wallis*, whom the Conventiclers and

Conven-

Conventicle-leaders ador'd for a *Saint*, have thus set him out
to posterity, least hereafter it should be deny'd that those *Non-*
conformists had once such a *Saint* as the *Cobler* of *Glo-*
cester.

FINIS.
